My dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of September 28th and hasten to answer it, the questions you put to me.

1. The best parts of our Northern Annam Territory for big game shooting are in one direction the sides of the Song Con from -- Phu Qui)86 Kilometres from Vink by rail and road for carriages or rickshas, in all 7 hours journey) as far as Cay Chank, coming down the river and hunting both banks for 70 Kilometres at least from November 15th. to the end of March; and in the other direction the district around Cho Pho and Voi Bo Hatrai (Voi Bo is -- 15 hours from Vink by rickshs or carriage and then on by small sampans).

The Country is more difficult there being more thickly -- wooded: but M. Bordit and Messrs. L and V Chaget live there - planters and friends of mine and also great hunters.

(a) Elephants are not rare as well on the Song Con or at Voi Boi: but ~~firetrisiers~~ Large Buckers are very rare, the herds which -- frequent these districts having been hunted and decimated a few years ago by the Laotian hunters who chase them -- from Laos.

(b). The wild buffalo (Bulalus, Tuni, Cairboo &c. - anglice Buffalo) does not exist, whatever certain planters - -- ignorant of natural history may say - on the maritime slope of the ~~Announts~~ Annamite watershed.

They are met with only in Cambodia in the Savane; and all over India and the Indo Malayan continent, but not in -- Annam or Tonkin.

What is wrongly called buffalo here is an ox (Bos of the species Gauribos, Bebos Uribos &c.) Anglice Bull bison.

This not exactly the game of the Anglo Indian peninsular but a species of which ~~rather~~ there are several distinct species of which some such as the Gauribos, and Uribos are of undoubtedly greater bulk that the Indian bull bison (1 m 80 to 2 m 20 at the withers.

The wild oxen are very plentiful on the sides of Song Con which surrounds our agricultural concession of Do ng Coe - a brick house cooped with tiles) You will be able to -- hunt them very easily - as also at Voi Bo but less easily.

(c). The tiger, the great invisible is everywhere and nowhere. Without attracting him with a live bait or beating him up upon chance information of the animal lying up, and has been seen by the natives, one has little chance of meeting him but with this animal one never knows.

(d). Stags and deer abound.

The different kinds are as follows :-.

Cervus Concolor - Sambur, Anglice Sambar, a tall beast (as much as 1m 30 at the shoulder) to be found in the very early morning.

Cervus Sika - Sika indochinois (wrongly called Axis) a spotted deer with 4 points.

Cervulus Muntjac.

Barking dear.

Cervulus Elaphodus Elaphode, Dagueh and another large deer that cannot only be distinguished from Sambur if one is -- versed in natural history - the Rusa or Oussa (Ruso Austlitelis).

(e). The wild boars are very numerous but they are hard to see as they only come out at night and lie up in covers before the sun is up.

One can however meet them early in morning or in the -- evening twilight. Some old solitary boars attain enormous -- proportions.

The best means of hunting these animals is to beat the bush upon certain information. You must establish yourself for 4 or 5 days in a camp (say a village or wood-cutters camp &c) and promise a reward to the natives who will warn you of the presence, in such and such a part of the -- surrounding Country, of wild oxen, deer or elephants.

The beating is difficult owing to the thickly wood -- nature of the Country and of the scarcity of inhabitants in the districts in question: but we have however on -- several occasions been able to turn wild oxen that we have clearly seen take cover in the forest.

The best plan is for 2 or 3 groups to go in different directions, straight ahead, noiselessly, with a good - - native guide.

One does not always have the good fortune to come across big game, but in the end, one may not get such a bad bag with patience and hard work.

It is necessary to have for arms pwerful rifles in order to kill large gaulbos, elephants or rhinoceros (rare of late) properly.

The English 400 Calibre Cordite 3 360 No.2 Cordite are the smallest Calibres to be used. The 450 and 475 Nitro Cordite are very much better for the purpose.

The Holland and Holland "Paradoi" 12 or 10 bore may serve at close quarters, as also heavy rifles of 12, 10 or 8 bore using black powder ~~xxx~~ or granulated Cordite.

For small deer the 303 rifle is useful for long -- range shooting with sfot nosed solid or express bullets.

3. In these weeks you can have a very ~~p~~fitty shooting trip and be certain of not returning empty handed.

With 8 or 10 dividing each day into parties of two you will beat in 15 days an enormous extent of hunting ground and will have a fair bag of big game.

Two of us, my father and I, nearly every year, in 8 ~~xx~~ to 12 days shooting have average - 5 or 6 caribous, 5 to 10 deer, with peacock, jungle fowl and pheasant (these last more rare) Galore.

4. I will furnish you at Vinh with a boy or interpreter whose duty it will be to provide you in the villages on the Song Con with competent guides, but it would be as well, to enable you to understand what these guides may have to say when actually hunting, if each party had with it a boy speaking annamite and

English or French (estimating one guide to each party of two or three white sportsmen) - Otherwise how will you know what the guides in question say to you who do not speak a word of English and French?

Perhaps if your companions can speak French well enough I could find for you here two or three boys who also speak a little of that language.

A guide will be pleased with 30 cents a day and a reward of, say, $1.00 per head of large game shot.

5. The cost of an expedition like this apart from the expenses of the commissariat which you will have to provide at Hanoi or Hongkong, (here there are 2 Chinese grocers but not so well -- provisionned as Hanoi and Hongkong shops) will be :-

$1.00 a day per sampan carrying 2 or 3 people, on the Song Con to take you from Phu Qui to Sen and Dong Coe and down the River (-- about 8 or 12 days in all or more if you can spare the time: and returning to Phu Qui by ricksha from Vink to Phui Qui $6 or $7 about - the return fare is the same.

The boys will cost, say 50 cents a day each at the most.

Coolies for the provisions and baggage from Vink to Phu Qui will cost you 40 cents for 30 or 35 Kilometres (2 coolies at 20 cents) and the same for the return journey.

On the Song Con from ~~Cayx Chank~~ Phu Qui to Cay Chank and from Cay Chank to Phu Qui (the returns journey) you will put all your -- gear in sampans. If you have your provisions or a tent and your baggage carried into the interior at some distance from the Song Con river you will only have to pay about 20 to 30 cents a day per coolie.

6. Once arrived at Phu Qui - (by railway from Vink to Yen Ley one hour and by ricksha from Yenley to Phu Qui 6 hours) Your best course will be, as soon as your gear has arrived, to drop down the river Song Con in sampans, stopping at different points where the jungle is penetrable, and at different villages or woodcutters

camps ant to go shooting on foot.

Horses are no use there, continually changing ground as you will be.

7. It will be advisable to take a good tent to sleep in, one or more nights some distance away from the river and the villages in certain districts in the interior near hunting grounds where you may have seen, we will say, recent numerous traces of big game, and to avoid the trouble of again covering, to get back to your camp or sampans 12 or 15 Kilometres or more before night fall (on account of tigers you must not travel in the bush on foot after twilight.

But of course one can stay if one wishes in the villages or in sampans.

8. The whole of the hunting country, which is all jungle, is -- accordingly feverish but in winter it is less so than in Summer: it is however necessary to take on the evening before leaving for Phu Qui, at Vink 80 centi-grammes of chlorohydrate of Quinine, and every morning or evening following 20 or 25 centigrammes.

By so doing you run absolutely no risk whatever.

Even in cloudy weather you must wear an "Insoler Hat" (light to pee or double felt English hat as one sees in Colombo). 75 per cent of the cases of malaria are course sun-stroke - this is absolutely known to be the case.

The native are sufficiently quiet. Some marauding bands have fled the country persued by our military.

In any case they would not attach 4 or 5 Europens armed for -- shooting who are well behaved.

9. Clothing of a medium lightness is preferable to full summer -- kit or full winter kit.

Khaki is enough, if worn over a good waist coat (or singlet?) and under a water proof in rainy weather, with an over coat in -- case of cold.

One should not shoot here before the 15th. November as the -- heavy rains do not cease till the 8th or 10th. of that month.

Even towards the 15th. of the moneh the temperature varies between 10, 12 and 25 degrees centugoade or between 50 and 77 degrees - - fahrenheit.

There is much damp and sometimes drizzling rain.

In December and particularly at the end of January the temperature may be as low as 41 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit but very seldom below 45 degrees.

But the damp makes this temperature seem very low when one is -- exposed in a cramped position and badly sheltered during the night.

In walking during the day, one can bear with difficulty and in any case very seldom, a moderately heavy cloth suit.

A good khaki jacket over a flannel shirt, or sweater, or woollen waist coat, is more than sufficient.

Of course good rugs are needed at night.

Foot gear ought to be pretty strong as one gets into a nice mess sometimes: and one meet water nearly everywhere and of the mud.

Without hotnails or spikes , at any rate in your heels, you will slip at every step on the wet clayey soil. 77 60

You must have nails in the heels of your boots and good begging as beches abound in the jungle and the damp grass.

Provisions.

Except for eggs few or far apart in certain villages, and a few skinning chickens, you will find nothing in the bush by way of -- provisions.

You will have to carry everything that you require to feed -- yourself throughout the whole trips.

As for bread you can get some at Vink (sandwiches made of -- English bread keep well for 7 or 8 days).

You can also get at Vink, jams, vegetables, meat chickens butter oil candles, and all ordinary things.

But provide yourself at Hanoi with wine, whisky, soda, various daintres &c.

Two or three portable acetglene gas lamps are the best things to get.

The carbon is easy to carry in hermetically sealed boxes (as for example old Vilmoui andrieux carden seed boxes): and the -- light is much more agreeable than that of ~~photographe~~ photophoes or candles whose glass globes are very fragile: or than petrol lamps which are hard to transport and which communicate - -- clinging smell to all your provisions.

You do not want the tent or tents to be two heavy or difficult to take down, for two coolies only can work on one load in the narrow awkward paths.

The full load for 2 coolies should not exceed 30 or 35 kilos or at the most 40 kilos.

Small English air proof iron boxes are very handy as your baggage will be often lowered to the ground in wet or muddy -- places.

10. You can take as many arms as you please but your friends will have to declare them at Hanoi or Haiphong where they will be given, moreover, fuller information on this subject than I can give you.

Furnished with papers and permits all in order, your friends will not be bothered in any way.

They will only have to shew the papers that will be handed -- them in Tong Kin on their arrival or on their departure for Vink.

11. For all information as to shooting in Kebao, Ke dela Table &c. (game not plentiful, certainly no wild oxen) apply to M. Rogue gun maker all about it - I know nothing at all.

12. The Chief Engineer of the Hongay mines can also perhaps give you information (??)

13. The only map upon which I can give you information known to myself is that of Vink and particularly of Phu Dien.

Carte Provisiorie de l' annam to be obtained at Edition November 1902.

Schneider's library in Haiphong or Hanoi or at the Indo China Geographical service at Hanoi .

By these 2 sheets and I will mark them for you yourself.
I can at your disposal for all further information.

Yours &c.

Lejeune.